

A Study of Pedagogical Knowledge and Teaching Creativity among Arabic Language Teachers in Malaysia

Mohammad Rusdi Bin Ab Majid

Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Dato' Razali Ismail
21030 Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu, Malaysia
mrusdi@ipg.edu.my

Che Mohd Zaid, Kasyfullah Abd Kadir

Center for Foundation and Continuing Education
Universiti Malaysia Terengganu
21030 Kuala Nerus, Terengganu, Malaysia
cmzaid@umt.edu.my , kasyfullah.kadir@umt.edu.my

Jumadil Saputra

Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development
Universiti Malaysia Terengganu
21030 Kuala Nerus, Terengganu, Malaysia
jumadil.saputra@umt.edu.my

Zawawi Bin Ismail

Faculty of Education,
Universiti Malaya
50603 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
zawawiismail@um.edu.my

Mohd Ala Uddin Othman

Faculty of Languages and Communication
Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin
21300 Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia
mohdalauddin@unisza.edu.my

Abstract

Pedagogical knowledge is a unique skill that should be owned by teachers, especially for Arabic language teachers. It is one of the elements in Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge. This study aims to identify the pedagogical knowledge and teaching creativity of Arabic language teachers in Malaysia. Also, to examine the correlation between pedagogical knowledge and teaching creativities. This quantitative study through survey questionnaire (by self-administered) conducted on 530 Arabic language teachers around Malaysia, including Sabah and Sarawak, participated in this study. The sample selected by using a random sampling technique. The data analysed using descriptive statistics and correlation analyses involving mean, standard deviation and Person correlation assisted by statistical software, namely SPSS-20. This study showed that the Arabic language's pedagogical knowledge and teaching creativity among Malaysia teachers are categorised as high. This study also found a positive and significant correlation between pedagogical knowledge and teaching creativity with the correlation coefficient is 63.1 per cent. Its

correlation categorised as moderate. In conclusion, this study has identified that Arabic language teachers in Malaysia have excellent pedagogical and teaching creativity knowledge.

Keywords

Pedagogical knowledge, teaching creativity, technological pedagogical content knowledge, Arabic language teachers

1. Introduction

Pedagogical knowledge is a unique knowledge that needs to be owned by every teacher. It is an extensive and profound knowledge of the teaching and learning process. Pedagogical knowledge covers classroom management, school organisations, school curriculum, teaching behaviour, teachers' interactions, etc. It is one of the critical elements to be raised by Mishra and Koehler (2006) and Shulman (1987, 1986) to effectively refer to teachers' knowledge and understanding in teaching and learning. This knowledge needs to be owned by a Century 21 teacher in preparation to teach in tandem with age development. Many studies showed high importance to the mastery of pedagogical knowledge of a teacher. Almost all educational experts agreed to pedagogical knowledge needs in producing good teaching. These requirements are increasingly demanding in line with the current day circulation that emphasises the information technology needs. Teachers' pedagogical practices directly play an essential role in effective teaching and learning process (Abdullah Nasih Ulwan, 1994; Voss, Kunter & Baumert, 2011; Konig et al., 2011; Sidek Baba, 2004; Paolini, 2015).

In the context of this study, the teaching creativity is one of the critical aspects that should be taken in implementing the teaching and learning process so that it can generate significant changes in the ideas set by the National Education Philosophy. For that purpose, the creative teaching aspect is a basis for the achievement of student excellence. The development of current education also demands to change from all perspectives, especially in implementing the teaching process to students. Hence, changes to the teaching and learning process of the Arabic language should be employed to ensure the development of the students' knowledge construction can face the current challenges. Today, the development of information technology impacts education and pedagogical knowledge of teachers (Chien Lee Shing et al. 2015; Rice et al. 2017). At the same time, creativity is also required by a teacher to make a teaching process conducted as a means of being meaningful and capable of attracting students' interest. Therefore, this study is significant to identify the level of pedagogical knowledge and teaching creativity. Also, to examine the correlation between pedagogical knowledge and the creativity of teaching in Arabic language teachers in Malaysia.

The above discussion clearly stated the importance of pedagogical knowledge and creativity in implementing teaching and learning. Thus, all parties responsible for ensuring the sustainable of teachers' commitment. These requirements focus not only on individual teachers but also on the entire Malaysian teachers' organisation, including the Arabic language. Many studies proved that the Arabic language teacher should ensure comprehensive dominance, especially in pedagogical for Arabic language subjects (Zawawi, 2005; Hassan Basri, 2005; Mohammad Seman, 2003; Mohammad Rusdi, 2018). There are not many large research pieces related to pedagogical knowledge and teaching creativity among Arabic language teachers in Malaysia. For that reason, it is an in-depth study to investigate the educational of the Arabic language teachers' knowledge to be in line with the requirements in the 21st century. Reviews on this Arabic language are very relevant because the teacher is an implementing agent for all policies introduced by the government.

2. Literature Review

Most of the previous research conducted in Malaysia proved teachers' weaknesses in the aspect of pedagogical knowledge (Abdullah Ishak, 1995; Ab. Halim Tamuri et al., 2004; BPI, 1993; Abdul Rahman & Yusni Abd Rahman, 2003; Che Kamarudin Kamel Che Muhammad, 1999; Hasbullah Kamarulzaman Abdul Ghani et al., 2003; Mohd. Jasmy Abd. Rahman & Muhammad Yusro Borhan Nordin, 2003; Muhammad Rusdi, 2010; Rosmaria Mohd Sahat, 2003; Rusni Abdul Latif, 2007; Yahya Abdullah, 2003; Zarima Mohd Zakaria, 2005). The pedagogical knowledge level is moderate (Amri, 2005; Majdah Mohammad, 2010; Mohamad Zarkhuan Zainal, 2010; Nor Faizah, 2005; Omar, 2010; Rofeah, 2007; Yasrina Yaacob, 2010). The pedagogical knowledge aspects of creativity is an essential element of a teacher. Many studies found that creativity element is needed for a teacher in the process of educating children (Abdullah Hassan & Ainon, 2006; Chamorro and Richenbacher, 2008; Cropley, 1999; Furlong, 2005; Maybien, J & Swan, 2007; Robert, 2006; Trivedi & Bhargava, 2010; Yu & Patterson, 2010; Zawawi Ismail, 2005). The teaching and learning process will also be more meaningful if there is a creative element. A study made by the Foundation for Critical has found that nearly 90% of the teachers are creative, and it helped the success of the teaching process (Debra Jackson & Paul Newberry, 2012).

3. Methodology

This study is designed using a quantitative approach through a survey questionnaire and distributed to Arabic language teachers in Malaysia. The study was carried out throughout Malaysia involving 14 states, divided into five main zones, namely the north, south, Central, east, and East Malaysia, namely Sabah and Sarawak. This study uses questionnaires as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire used for pedagogical knowledge is based on instruments introduced by Mishra & Koehler (2006), Denise A. Schmidt (2009) and a questionnaire developed by Zahra Hossein (2012). While questionnaires for teaching creativity, teachers were based on questionnaires suggested by Amabile (1996) and Sternberg (2006, 2010). All these questionnaires were used as the basis for the construction of items for this study. However, this questionnaire has been modified according to the suitability of the study. A total of 13 items were used to gauge the knowledge of pedagogical and 14 items to measure teaching creativity among Arabic language teachers.

In this study, the population involves Arabic language teachers teaching in national primary schools throughout Malaysia at 7,309 (KPM, 2013). The Arabic language teachers elected in this study comprised Arabic language teachers who were confirmed in service. The sample in this study involves 530 Malay teachers throughout Malaysia. To obtain researchers' data have been using a random sampling method. The questionnaire Data for this study is processed using the 'Statistical Package for the Social Science' version 20 (SPSS). The Data collected will be analysed by descriptive, including frequency, percentage, min and standard deviation. Descriptive analysis is used to clarify pedagogical knowledge and creativity of teaching for Arabic language teachers in Malaysia. To answer researchers' question using mean score interpretation (Nunnally, 1967) as in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean-Score Interpretation

Mean	Level
1.00 – 2.00	Low
2.01 – 3.00	Medium Low
3.01 – 4.00	Medium-high
4.01 – 5.00	High

4. Results

4.1 Pedagogical Knowledge

The question of this study is to identify pedagogical knowledge among Arabic language teachers in Malaysia. A total of 13 items provided to obtain data relating to pedagogical knowledge. Table 3 shows frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation and mean interpretation for pedagogical knowledge. The entire mean of all the items for pedagogical knowledge is 4.03, with a standard deviation of 0.36 at high mean interpretations (4.01 – 5.00). This finding explains that the Arabic language teachers in Malaysia strongly dominate pedagogical (PP) knowledge and are suitable for a teacher to implement an effective teaching and learning process. Based on this study, there are 9 out of 13 items in the high mean interpretation value. Among them are teachers know how to evaluate students' performance in class (mean = 4.18, SP = 0.45), teachers can modify teaching methods based on students' understanding level (min = 4.13, SP = 0.49), teachers can evaluate students' learning in various ways (mean = 4.07, SP = 0.48). It explains that the Arabic language teachers possess diverse skills in pedagogical knowledge (PP).

The findings also showed that the respondent had various views in the mastery of pedagogical against the four basic Arabic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The mastery of teaching skills shows that the Arabic language teacher is at high mean interpretations (mean = 4.02, SP = 0.48). The respondents agreed and strongly agreed to 90.8%, the mastery in teaching Arabic language writing skills. Also, at high mean interpretations (mean = 4.02, SP = 0.50) with the percentage of respondents agreed and strongly agreed 90.0%. Similarly, in the teaching of Arabic language listening skills, the Arabic language teacher is at the high mean interpretation level (mean = 4.01, SP = 0.51) with agreed percentages and highly agreed 86.2%. However, in teaching the Arabic language teachers' proficiency in the high mean level (mean = 3.98, SP = 0.54) with agreed percentages and highly agreed 86.2%. This finding explains that the Arabic language teachers strongly dominate pedagogical (PP) knowledge, especially in teaching reading, writing, and listening skills. However, for the skills of the Arabic language, teachers only master the knowledge of speaking skills.

The findings of the study explained, there are 4 out of 13 items that recorded a medium-high mean that teachers can easily detect public mistakes faced by students (mean = 3.98, SP = 0.51), teachers can teach good Arabic language proficiency (mean = 3.98, SP = 0.54), teachers can use various teaching approaches (mean = 3.96, SP = 0.49) and common teachers with wrong concepts faced students (Min = 3.86, SP = 0.60). It explains that the Arabic language teachers only dominate the pedagogical of Arabic language teaching. In the context of this study, it strongly dominates

the level of knowledge of pedagogical with the ability to apply and implement pedagogical knowledge as a form of knowledge that can be implemented in the teaching process. The Arabic language teachers also heavily dominate in the three main skills required to teach primary school Arabic, i.e. listening skills, reading skills and writing skills, as highlighted in the primary school integrated curriculum (KBSR). However, the Arabic language teachers only dominate the skills in pedagogical knowledge.

4.2 Creative Teaching Teacher Arabic language

The subsequent analysis will answer the second research question, what is the creative level of teaching teachers in Malaysia. There are three main aspects of teaching creativity: motivation, thinking style and environment. Table 4.10 shows frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation, and mean interpretation for the creativity of Arabic language teachers' teaching from motivation. The overall mean of all the items for the creativity of motivation teaching is 4.16, with a standard deviation of 0.408 at the high-mean interpretation level. The Arabic language teachers' motivational study findings show all 6 creativity items for the motivation of high mean, and its value is almost evenly ranging from the value of 4.19 to 4.11. Among the items are, open teachers receive student suggestions (mean = 4.19, SP = 0.47) with a percentage of agreed responses and highly agreed 86.8%, followed by teacher's items to motivate students (mean = 4.18, SP = 0.50) with a percentage of agreed responses and highly agreed 95.3% and teacher items gave constructive feedback on students' responses (min = 4.17, sp = 0.48) with a percentage of agreed responses and This finding explains that the Arabic language teachers in Malaysia strongly dominate the creativity of teaching in motivation when performing the teaching and learning process.

While the Arabic language Teachers' environment's findings show the overall mean of all the items is 4.08 with a standard deviation value of 0.46 at the high mean interpretation level. The findings show that 3 out of 4 items of creativity are at high mean level. Among these items are, teachers create a conducive environment atmosphere (mean = 4.13, SP = 0.48) with a percentage of agreed response and highly agreed 94.1%, followed by teacher items received healthy competition between co-workers (mean = 4.12, sp = 0.51) with a percentage of agreed responses and highly agreed 93.6% and teacher items discussing with colleagues about teaching and learning (min = 4.12, SP = 0.52) with a percentage of agreed responses and strongly agreed 92.8%. This finding explains that Arabic language teachers strongly dominate the creative aspects of the teaching environment.

However, there is a creativity item in the environment that is at the medium-level high mean that the teacher item is not overloaded to carry out teaching (mean = 3.91, SP = 0.82). The findings explained that the workload faced by the Arabic language teachers influenced the creativity of teacher teaching. Overall, this finding explains that the Arabic language teachers in Malaysia strongly dominate teaching creativity in the teaching and learning process's environmental aspects. However, the burden of work is among the obstacles to the creativity of teaching teachers.

The third thing that is studied is in terms of thought style. The overall mean of all the items for the creativity of teaching-style thinking is 3.96 with a standard deviation value of 0.464 at the high of medium mean level. The study's findings show that 3 out of 4 items of creativity of thought style are at a medium-high mean. Among these items are, teachers give students the freedom to choose Friends in Activities P & P (Min = 3.99, SP = 0.62), teacher items using interesting teaching materials (mean = 3.98, SP = 0.55) and the last item is the teacher to make renewal of furniture layout in class (Mean + 3.84, SP = 0.74). However, at a high mean level, teachers adapt the teaching style to different students (mean = 4.13, SP = 0.48). Overall, this finding shows Arabic language teachers only dominate the creativity of teaching in terms of thinking style. In conclusion, the overall findings for the creative teaching teachers in Malaysia showed that they strongly dominate teaching creativity, especially in motivation and environment when implementing the teaching and learning process. However, Arabic language teachers dominate creativity in the aspect of thought style. The overall mean of all the teaching creativity items is 4.08, with a standard deviation value of 0.38 at the high mean interpretation level. The conclusion of this finding can be noted in Table 2 below:

Table 2. The Distribution of creativity, Min, standard deviation and mean of Arabic language teachers

Creative aspects	Min	Sp	Level
Motivation	4.16	0.408	High
Environment	4.08	0.465	High
Thought style	3.96	0.464	Medium-high
Overall	4.08	0.384	High

4.3 Knowledge relations pedagogical with the creativity of teacher teaching

This section will answer whether there is a significant relationship between pedagogical knowledge and the creativity of teaching in Arabic language teachers in Malaysia. Table 3 shows the relationship between pedagogical knowledge and creativity for Arabic language teachers in Malaysia.

Table 3. Knowledge relationship pedagogical with teaching creativity

	Pedagogical knowledge
Teaching Creativity	0.631**
Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	0.000

Table 3 showed a positive and significant relationship between pedagogical knowledge with the creativity of teaching teachers ($r = .631, p < 0.01$). This relationship strength is categorised as moderate.

5. Discussion

This division will discuss in more detail the findings of research that has been analysed. The discussion involves the aspect of research findings from an analysis conducted based on the study's objectives. Discussions will be prefixed to the knowledge of pedagogical and follow the discussion on the creativity of teaching.

5.1 Pedagogical knowledge

The knowledge of pedagogical in this study refers to the knowledge of Arabic language teachers in teaching and learning, knowledge of students and learning, class management, evaluation and reflection. In this study, the knowledge of pedagogical is one of the important matters for a teacher. The study proves that pedagogical knowledge is a component that Arabic language teachers in Malaysia highly dominate. The interest was expressed by Mishra & Koehler (2006) when defining the meaning of pedagogical knowledge based on the knowledge model of the pedagogical content (PTPK) or even better known as pack. This interest was also supported by a study done by Shulman, 1987; Ishak & Koh, 1992; Grossman, 1990 and Sulaiman Ngah Razali 2001. The interest was also emphasised by the Ministry of Education when the Malaysian Teachers Standards (SGM) (2010) also emphasised the importance of pedagogical knowledge in giving a rating of teachers.

An Arabic teacher who has no good knowledge of pedagogical is likely not to achieve the satisfaction factor in teaching as one of its factors is dependent on the mastery of pedagogical knowledge (Rusydi To'imah, 1989; Schempp et al., 1998). The study found that several aspects showed the teacher strongly dominated the elements that were studied. Among these elements are teachers know how to evaluate students' performance in class, teachers can modify teaching methods based on students' understanding levels, teachers can evaluate students' learning in various ways. All these findings reflect on the understanding and good practice of pedagogical practised by Arabic language teachers. Teachers' mastery of these elements is in line with the study's findings and recommendations conducted by Koehler & Mishra, 2008; Shulman, 1987; Grossman, 1990; and Mat Taib Pa, 2007.

The finding of this study coincided with a study performed by To'imah, 1986, and Ahmad Ali et al., 2008, stating to improve pedagogical skills, teachers need always to improve the quality of teaching as it is the 'core business' of teachers. Teachers must also be smart in managing learning resources as these efforts are important to help students understand and achieve. Besides that, teachers must also be smart to choose the resources, teaching and learning tools following the teaching and learning plans to produce effective learning. Therefore, teachers need to choose and adjust the source material to suit the place, difficulty, amount, function, size and care factors.

This study also shows that Arabic language teachers in Malaysia strongly dominate the basic Arabic language skills in terms of the teaching of Arabic language listening, teaching of Arabic language reading skills, and teaching of Arabic language writing skills. This finding is in line with the study's findings carried out by Amri, 2005; Omar, 2010; Nor Faizah, 2005 and Rofeah, 2007. Generally, this study shows that the Arabic language teachers in Malaysia have an excellent ability to implement teaching and learning skills to listen, read and write Arabic. However, studies found that Arabic language teachers only managed to master Arabic language skills compared to three other basic skills at a very dominant level. This study's findings coincide with the research conducted by Mat Taib Pa, 2007; Muhammad Azhar, 2007; Rusydi To'imah, 1989, 2004; Norhasliza, 2008 and Zawawi Ismail, 2008. In the researchers' opinion, the differences occurred between the previous findings with the findings of researchers may be due to the effectiveness, of course, pedagogical organised by the Ministry of Education. Based on the findings of the study, 91.5% of the Arabic language teachers had attended a pedagogical course organised by the ministry throughout the country.

At the same time, the teaching year also played an important role in the pedagogical of teacher's knowledge control. The view was reinforced by Berliner (1995) and Lilia & Abdullah (1998) in a Model of teachers' development that they introduced. According to this model, the long term of teaching plays an important role in moulding teachers' expertise in any field, including the mastery of pedagogical knowledge. The teacher's development model was also supported by Ashton's Teaching & Webb (1986). As a whole, in the context of this study, the teachers strongly dominate the knowledge of pedagogical in the three main skills required in the teaching of the Arabic language, listening skills, reading skills and writing skills as emphasised in the integrated curriculum of Primary schools (KBSR). For the skills of the Arabic language teachers only. In conclusion, the Arabic language teachers in Malaysia strongly dominate the knowledge of pedagogical with the ability to implement important elements in pedagogical (PP) knowledge as a form of knowledge that can be implemented in the teaching process.

5.2 Teaching Creativity

Creative in the teaching and learning process is among the crucial things that need to be mastered by a teacher. It is particularly urgent when the current education progress claims to drastic changes in education to be aligned with the current changes. Hence, the ongoing education process needs to be kept on the creative teaching aspect to attract students to continue to remain interested during the teaching process. Studies show that Arabic language teachers in Malaysia are creative in teaching. It can be seen from the teachers accepting students' suggestions, teachers motivate students, and teachers provide constructive feedback on students' answers. The findings showed clear that Arabic language teachers had the necessary creativity for the creativity of teaching. The characteristics of the Arabic language teachers in the results of this study are in line with the study conducted by Cropley (1997), and Furlong (2005) which have found that the teachers need to encourage student creativity as findings in this study.

This study also explains that teachers' teaching process greatly influenced and generates the development of student learning process. Dynamism is a good teaching process with creative elements to be the basis for effective teaching and learning practices (Abdullah Hassan & Aion Mohd, 2006). This study's findings were in line with the findings of research conducted by Yu & Patterson (2010) and Trivedi Studies & Bhargava (2010), which found that the pedagogical pattern or pedagogical knowledge influenced the student's creativity level. Concerning the creativity of teaching teachers, studies show the Arabic language teachers less use of maujud materials such as the layout of furniture in the classroom for creativity stimulation instead of the stimulation of other aspects such as communication, attitudes and aspects that are related to the teaching and learning process.

Teachers also lack the use of interesting teaching materials to stimulate students' creativity. At the same time, studies also show that Arabic language teachers use non-maujud elements such as communication elements and attitudes to stimulate student creativity. It is possible due to non-maujud elements to be used as compared to the more and more difficult maujud elements for beer. This finding is in line with the study results conducted by Ab Halim & Zaradi Sudin (2007) who found Islamic and Arabic educational teachers in Malaysia more are computer users, rather than the creator or competent computer. Overall, the results found that teachers' creativity is a critical element in contributing to the success of the teaching and learning process. The study also shows that Arabic language teachers in Malaysia are creative and able to perform the teaching process by adopting creative elements and having characteristics for a creative person.

5. Conclusion

Overall, the study results found that the IPGKSM Arabic language is only successful in mastering the knowledge of pedagogical that should be highly dominated by teachers who implement the teaching and learning process. Teachers need to prepare for the changes that occur in teaching and learning patterns nowadays. The willingness to learn something new is the main asset to cope with the rapid changes in the education industry. Thus, teachers should be prepared to change, be competent, and dominate new knowledge as it is among the major powers present.

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Biographies

Mohammad Rusdi Bin Ab Majid is a PhD holder and works as a senior lecturer at Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Dato' Razali Ismail, Malaysia. He has published 7 articles Scopus/ WoS indexed. He earned her PhD in Education from the University Malaya, Malaysia. His research interests are in the areas of education, language learning environment, curriculum and linguistic.

Che Mohd Zaid is a PhD holder and works as a senior lecturer at the Center for Foundation and Continuing Education (PPAL), Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia. He has published 7 articles Scopus/ WoS indexed. He earned her PhD in Education from the University Malaya, Malaysia, specialising in learning environment. His research interests are in the areas of education, language learning environment, curriculum and linguistic.

Jumadil Saputra is a PhD holder and works as a senior lecturer in the Department of Economics, Faculty of Business, Economics, and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia. He has published 125 articles Scopus/ WoS indexed. As a lecturer, he has invited as a speaker in numerous universities, the examiner (internal and external), the reviewer for article journal and proceeding, the conference committee, journal editorial board, and others. He is a professional member of the International Business Information Management Association (IBIMA), Ocean Expert: A Directory of Marine and Freshwater Professional, and Academy for Global Business Advancement (AGBA). His research areas are Quantitative Economics (Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, and Economic Development), Econometrics (Theory, Analysis, and Applied), Islamic Banking and Finance, Risk and Insurance, Takaful, i.e., financial economics (Islamic), mathematics and modelling of finance (Actuarial). His full profile can be accessed from <https://jumadilsaputra.wordpress.com/home-2/>.

Kasyfullah Abd Kadir is Kasyfullah Abd Kadir is Kasyfullah Abd Kadir is a PhD holder in Arabic Translations obtained from University Science Malaysia (USM) in year 2018. Awarded MA in Modern Language Studies from University Malaya in year 2006 and his Bachelor in Arabic and Literature from Al Al-Bayt University, Jordan in year 1999. Previous as a Arabic Teacher under Ministry Of Education Malaysia. Now works as a senior lecturer in the Department of Language and Communication, Center for Foundation and Continuing Education (PPAL), Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia. He has taught Islamic Civilisation, Ethnic Relation and Arabic. His research areas are Translation Studies, Quranic studies, Civilisations and Teaching Arabic As A second language. He is a professional member of the Malaysian Translators Association (PPM).

Zawawi Bin Ismail is an associate professor at Faculty of Education, University of Malaya. He has published numerous articles Scopus/ WoS indexed. His research interests are in the areas of education, language learning, curriculum and linguistic, Arabic.

Mohammad Ala Uddin Othman is a PhD holder and works as a senior lecturer at Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia. He has published numerous articles Scopus/ WoS indexed. He earned her PhD in Education from the University Malaya, Malaysia, specialising in arabic. His research interests are in the areas of education, language learning, curriculum and linguistic, Arabic.